

Presbytery of the Coastlands

Visual Guide to the Ordination Process



Application



Inquiry



Candidacy



Certification



Ordination



The ordination process is a time of discernment for students, local congregations, and denominational bodies who work together to seek the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and attempt to discern the fittedness of an individual for ordained ministry.

Presbytery of the Coastlands **Ordination Process**

The Work of the Presbytery



The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) is comprised of elected elders and ministers who work on behalf of the Presbytery **to guide and prepare** Presbyterian students for the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament. As a commission, the CPM (with a quorum of 3) is authorized to take most actions at its meetings instead of waiting for the presbytery to act when it meets.

The Presbytery guides



The CPM will assign each person pursuing ordination to a liaison team, who will serve as a loving shepherd and guide, providing care, support, a listening ear, encouragement, challenge, and prayer. The home congregation and CPM use the term “under care” to describe this relationship.




The Presbytery prepares



The CPM also prepares students for ordained positions by ensuring standards have been met, requirements completed, and readiness is affirmed. Students who do not show readiness to move on, spiritual maturity to lead, or have failed to complete assigned requirements will not proceed until the commission sees evidence of continued growth.

Presbytery of the Coastlands Ordination Process

Three types of preparation: Academic, Experiential, and Denominational

Academic 	Experiential 	Denominational 
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a Master of Divinity degree.• Complete all required coursework.• Submit a final academic transcript.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a full unit (~300 hours) of supervised field education in a congregational setting.• Complete a full unit (~400 hours) of supervised Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at a certified site.• Complete an additional unit of a supervised field education or CPE (recommended but not required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete a Psychological Evaluation• Score 70% of above on the Bible Content Examination• Pass five ordination exams.• Write and respond to questions about a Statement of Faith.• Write an exegesis paper and deliver a 10-minute sermon.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Application



Before you begin your application to the formal process called ***Inquiry***, you will need to have been an active member of a congregation of the Presbytery of the Coastlands for at least six months. Arrange a time to your pastor about your sense of call to ordained ministry.



Ask your pastor to work with you to notify the Session that you would like to explore the process of seeking ordination in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Several forms from the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) website will be need to be completed by you (1A, 1B, 1C) and your Session (1D). Once you begin this process, you will need to resign from any leadership positions you hold in the congregation or Presbytery.



Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Application



Submit your completed application to your congregation's Clerk of Session and the Presbytery of the Coastlands office. The Presbytery will conduct a background check after they receive your application.



Schedule a date to meet with your Session. When they endorse you for *Inquiry*, they commit to support your exploration into professional ministry.



After you meet with the Session, they complete and submit a *Session Evaluation and Recommendation*, Form **1D**, which includes the selection of an elder to be a liaison between you and your Session. After CPM received a completed Form 1D, they will schedule a time to meet with you.



You will also need to request to have official transcripts from any colleges or seminaries you have attended to be sent to the CPM Moderator.

Presbytery of the Coastlands Ordination Process



Application

SUMMARY OF TASKS IN APPLICATION PHASE:



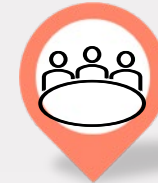
Applicant

- Speak to pastor.
- Notify Clerk of Session.
- Resign from church office and presbytery committees.
- Complete Forms 1A, 1B and 1C and submit to Clerk of Session.
- Meet with Session.
- Sign Covenant.
- Have transcripts sent to CPM Moderator.
- Meet with CPM.



Session

- Read applicant forms and conduct interview.
- Complete Form 1D.
- Assign Session liaison for applicant.
- Sign covenant.
- Notify CPM moderator of Session's recommendation



Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

- Schedule date for CPM to meet with applicant.
- Orient applicant's church Session about ordination process.
- Interview applicant and assign CPM liaison if approved.
- Conduct background check.

The ordination process is a time of discernment for students, local congregations, and denominational bodies who work together to seek the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and attempt to discern the fittedness of an individual for ordained ministry.

Presbytery of the Coastlands Ordination Process



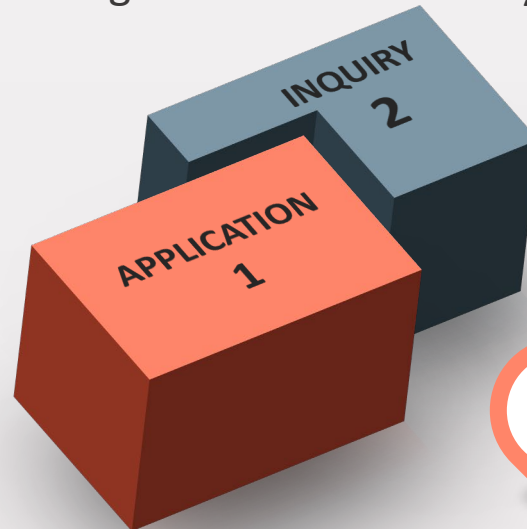
Inquiry



After the CPM approves you as an Inquirer at their initial meeting, the Inquiry phase begins. The CPM Moderator adds your name to the PCUSA online roster of Inquirers. Once enrolled, you may log in to the [PCUSA exams website](#) to select your password or to update contact information.



As an Inquirer you will spend the following year or more asking preliminary questions about your reasons for pursuing ordination, seeking God's direction, in hopes of developing a clearer calling to ordained ministry. What can begin as a "hunch" or "passion" for ministry usually develops into a clearer calling to ordained ministry.



It is important for you, your home church, and the CPM to remain open to various ministry possibilities as God's calling on your life continues to be unveiled.

Presbytery of the Coastlands Ordination Process



Inquiry

During the Inquiry phase, Inquirers complete the following:



- Begin Master of Divinity degree at an accredited seminary or divinity school.
- Take the [Bible Content Exam](#) (offered twice each year).
- Work on completing preliminary course requirements, including one (or possibly both) biblical language(s)



- Complete participate in a Psychological Examination through an approved counseling service in partnership with the CPM, (*Cost shared by Inquirer, Church, and CPM.*)



- Complete one (or possibly two) field education opportunities or units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).
- Send unofficial transcripts and field education assessments to liaison.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Inquiry

If you feel ready to proceed to Candidacy



- Complete form 5A. (Application to be enrolled as a Candidate).
- Submit a Statement of Faith draft. (details in Certification section)
- Schedule a meeting with Session and CPM to be evaluated and approved as a Candidate.
- After meeting, Session completes Form 5B; CPM completes Form 5C.
- All three parties sign Covenant Agreement



If you do not feel ready to proceed to Candidacy

- Complete Form 3 from OGA web site
- Schedule an Annual Consultation with Session and with CPM Liaison.

A student may request, or the CPM may decide to discontinue the ordination process with a detailed, written explanation provided for all three parties in the covenant agreement.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Inquiry

Before proceeding to the next phase of the preparation process, Candidates must write a substantive draft of a **Statement of Faith**. This creed-like statement of one to two single-spaced, typed pages is to reflect your beliefs, and those of the Reformed tradition and Presbyterian (USA) community in a unique way, in your voice. Your statement needs to demonstrate a reformed understanding of:

- **God**
- **Christ's person and work (including atonement)**
- **the Holy Spirit**
- **both sacraments**
- **Scripture**
- **the church**
- **the mission of the church**
- **the life of discipleship**
- **and the hope of new creation in Jesus Christ (eschatology).**



When you are ready to apply for candidacy, contact your liaison team to get their initial feedback on your Statement of Faith draft before meeting with the CPM.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Inquiry

SUMMARY OF TASKS IN INQUIRY PHASE:



Inquirer

- Log in to PCUSA exam website.
- Complete psychological assessment and pay 1/3 of cost.
- Take Bible Content Exam.
- Consult with CPM liaison team re: courses and field ed work.
- Complete required forms and Statement of Faith draft.
- Schedule annual consultation with Session and CPM.



Session

- Offer financial and spiritual support.
- Pay for one third of psychological evaluation.
- Read submitted forms and meet with Inquirer to determine readiness for Candidacy.
- Recommend Inquirer to CPM as a Candidate by completing and submitting a Form 5B.
- Encourage liaison to attend annual consult with CPM.



Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

- Schedule psych evaluation and pay one third of cost.
- After Form B is received, schedule an annual consultation and vote to advance to Candidacy if approved.
- Recommend Presbytery examine and advance Inquirer to Candidacy at its next meeting.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



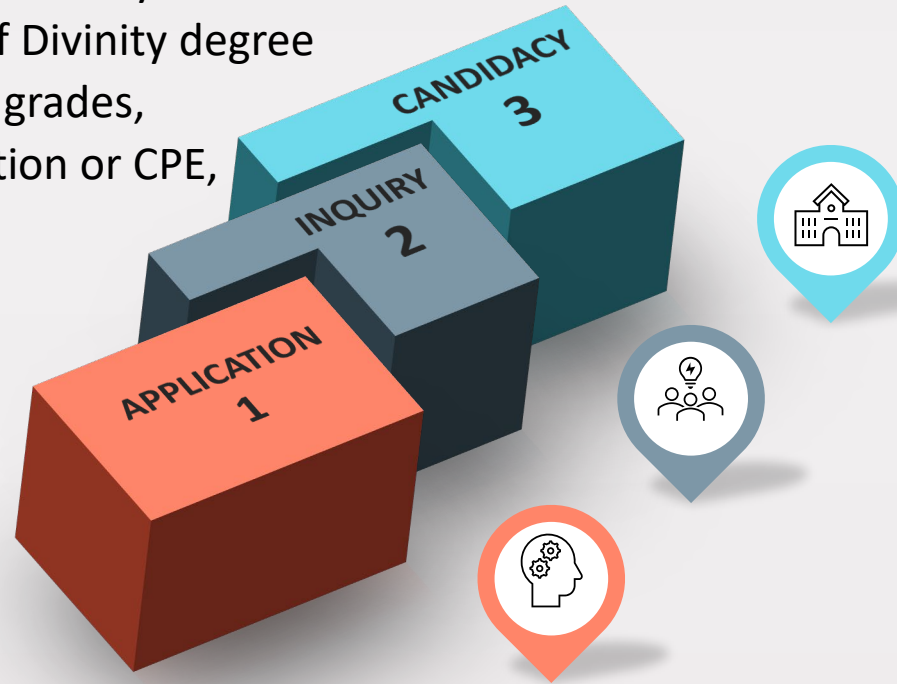
Candidacy

When your call has been affirmed by your home church and the presbytery, you will be asked to sign a Candidate Release and representatives from Session and CPM and you will sign a [Covenant Agreement](#).

Your focus for the next calendar year will be to:

- complete your Master of Divinity degree coursework with passing grades, participate in Field Education or CPE,
- and prepare for the
- four [ordination exams](#).

The following pages provide more details.



The ordination process is a time of discernment for students, local congregations, and denominational bodies who work together to seek the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and attempt to discern the fittedness of an individual for ordained ministry.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Candidacy

REQUIRED coursework for Coastlands Presbytery includes:

- Biblical Greek
- Biblical Hebrew
- Greek Exegesis or a Greek-based exegetical class on New Testament book(s)
- Hebrew Exegesis or a Hebrew-based exegetical class on Old Testament book(s)
- Reformed Worship (*other theology/worship/history with extensive work in Reformed worship, may be approved if cleared with liaisons.*)
- Church History Survey
- Old Testament Survey
- New Testament Survey
- Presbyterian Polity
- Reformed Theology/Theologian/Reformation History (*an upper-level course on Reformed doctrine, a specific Reformed theologian, or the Reformation era*)
- Christian Preaching

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Candidacy

RECOMMENDED coursework for Coastlands Presbytery includes:

- Justice/Mission Elective
- Systematic Theology Survey
- Worship Practicum (*a class that focuses on experiential learning in Sacraments, Weddings, Funerals, etc.*)
- Christian Education elective (*especially for students going into parish or academic vocations*)
- Pastoral Care elective (*especially for students going into parish or chaplaincy vocations.*)

EXCEPTIONS to the above (with approval) include:

- Exemptions due to prior coursework
- Individual study with a professor
- Individual study with an ordained minister
- Additional work or courses recommended by CPM when deemed beneficial

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Candidacy

Field Education

- **What and When?**



Complete ~300 hours (one unit) of a Field Education experience in a new congregational context with a supervisor. Students may complete this requirement part-time for an academic year, or full-time for a summer unit. Full-time, year-long residencies still count as one unit.

- **Where?**



A PC(USA) context is preferred for all students, and required for those new to this denomination. On rare occasions, candidates may receive CPM permission to serve at their home congregations. Candidate consents to having a written evaluation by the supervisor sent to the presbytery.

Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

- **What and When?**



Complete ~400 hours (one unit) of Clinical Pastoral Education, the clinical component of graduate theological education. CPE is typically completed part-time during the school year or full-time during the summer.

- **Where?**



CPE units take place at an accredited site (usually a hospital or health care setting) with a supervisor.

An additional unit of Field Education or CPE is encouraged and may be required in some circumstances.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Candidacy

During the year (or more) as a candidate, the CPM will approve you to register and take [four Senior ordination exams](#) :

- Worship and Sacraments
- Theological Competence
- Church Polity
- Bible Exegesis



The purpose of the exams is to provide both candidates and presbyteries with information to help in discerning “fitness and readiness for a call to ministry requiring ordination” as a minister of the Word and Sacrament (G-2.0604).

These exams are offered [three times per year](#), and can be taken in any order, usually toward the end of candidacy. Each exam is read by two or three readers from another presbytery and must receive a grade of “satisfactory” in order to pass. Results will be sent to CPM Moderator.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Candidacy

If you feel ready to proceed to Final Assessment

(to be declared Certified and Ready to Received a Call – “CRC”)

- Submit a final Statement of Faith.
- Write and submit an exegesis paper and related sermon.
- Send an official transcript to CPM.
- Schedule a meeting with Session to receive their endorsement
- Schedule time with CPM to be evaluated and approved as a Candidate. This includes reading Statement of Faith and preaching sermon.

If you do not feel ready to proceed to Final Assessment

- Complete Form 3 from OGA web site
- Schedule an Annual Consultation with Session and with CPM Liaison.

A student may request, or the CPM may decide to discontinue the ordination process with a detailed, written explanation provided for all three parties in the covenant agreement.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



Candidacy

SUMMARY OF TASKS IN CANDIDACY PHASE:



Candidate

- Continue coursework.
- Prepare for ordination exams.
- After CPM approves, register for and take ordination exams
- Complete CPE/Field Ed and send evaluations to CPM liaison team.
- Complete [Form 3](#)
- Schedule Annual Consultation with Session and CPM.



Session

- Continue to offer financial and spiritual support.
- Ask candidate to come to Session and give updates and/or have Session liaison give reports.
- Encourage liaison and/or pastor to attend Annual Consultation with CPM.



Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

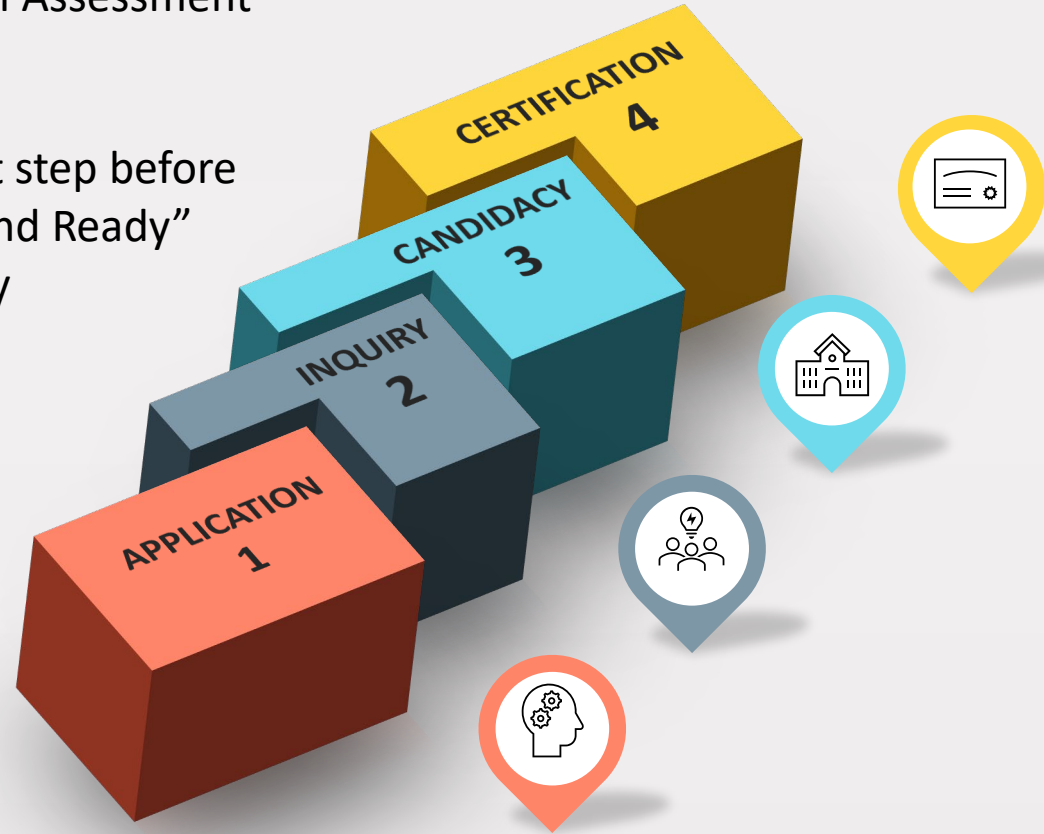
- Approve Candidate to take ordination exams.
- Approve CPE site.
- Receive and review CPE evaluation(s), Field Ed evaluation(s) and transcripts.
- Conduct Annual Consultation with Candidate

Presbytery of the Coastlands Ordination Process

Certification

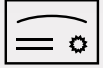
After all ordination requirements have been completed and approved, a Candidate prepares for a Final Assessment by the CPM.

The Final Assessment is the last step before a candidate can be “Certified and Ready” for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call to a congregation or specialized ministry.



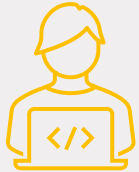
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Certification

To prepare for the Final Assessment, the Candidate completes and submits the following documents that take time and thoughtful reflection.



- **A Statement of Faith**
- **An exegetical paper** (fresh work for this occasion)
- **A sermon related to the exegesis paper**



After you complete the above documents and send them to CPM Moderator, schedule a time to meet with CPM at a future monthly meeting. Invite your Session liaison and pastor to attend with you.

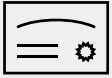


When you meet with CPM, they will ask you to read your Statement of Faith aloud and answer their questions about it and your exegetical paper. They may ask you about your ideal call, and any other developments since your last consultation.



You will be asked to deliver a 10 to 15-minute sermon to members of the CPM. If all documents and sermon are determined to be satisfactory, CPM will certify you as Certified and Ready to receive a Call (“CRC”).

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Ordination Process



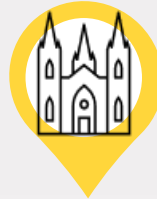
Certification

SUMMARY OF TASKS BEFORE CERTIFICATION:



Candidate

- Prepare Statement of Faith, exegetical paper and sermon and send to CPM.
- Send final transcript to Presbytery office.
- Schedule time to meet with Session.
- Schedule time at future CPM meeting.
- Meet with CPM for Final Assessment.



Session

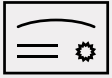
- Continue to offer support
- Check in with Candidate to endorse proceeding before their Final Assessment
- Encourage liaison and/or pastor to attend Final Assessment with CPM.



Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

- Read all Final Assessment documents.
- Conduct Final Assessment of Candidate.
- Assist candidate with Personal Information Form (PIF) after certification, if needed.

Presbytery of the Coastlands
Ordination Process



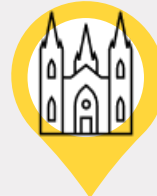
Certification

AFTER YOU ARE CERTIFIED AS READY TO RECEIVE A CALL:



Candidate

- Begin searching for a place to serve in ministry.
- Keep your liaison team updated on your progress.
- Let CPM know when a call has been secured.



Session

- Let the congregation know of your candidate's status of being "Certified and Ready" to receive a call.
- Continue to pray for your candidate.
- Assist your candidate in preparing



Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM)

- Continue to pray for and support candidate during the search process.
- Be available for consultation, guidance, and encouragement, until candidate receives a call.

Presbytery of the Coastlands Ordination Process








Ordination

The Presbytery calling the certified candidate creates an Administrative Commission and leads a service of ordination and installation, typically in the location of future service.

Invite the CPM to the service so they can celebrate with you!



Presbytery of the Coastlands
Visual Guide to the Ordination Process

-  **Application**
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May God bless your new ministry!